



**Consumer
Affairs**

**Preliminary Budget Hearing
New York City Council
Committee on Consumer Affairs**

March 21, 2016

**Alba Pico, Acting Commissioner
Bill de Blasio, Mayor**

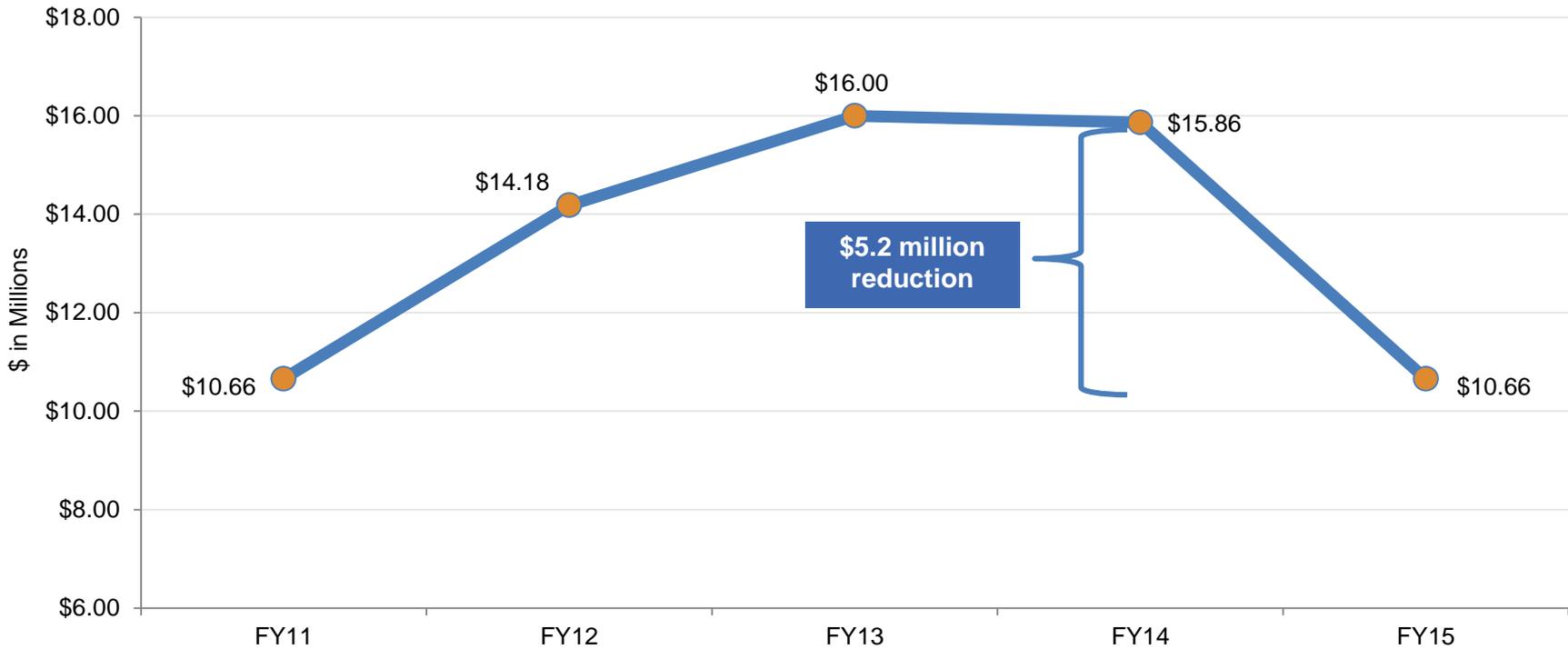
The Year in Review: Key Successes

- **Building on Small Business Reforms**
- **Protecting Consumers**
- **Innovating Enforcement Efforts**
- **Protecting Employees in NYC**
- **Advocating Fair Business Practices**
- **Financially Empowering New Yorkers**

Building on Small Business Reforms

- Reduce the number and cost of fines.
- Ensure equitable distribution of inspections and transparency.
- NYC Small Business Support Center in Jamaica, Queens.
- Focus on customer service.
- Increase transparency through data and innovation.

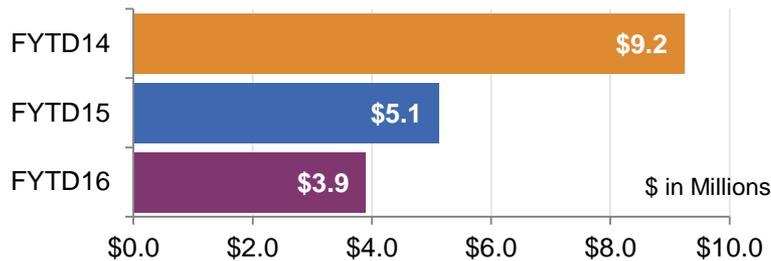
Small Business Fine Reductions



DCA surpassed Mayoral pledge for \$5 million in fine reductions.

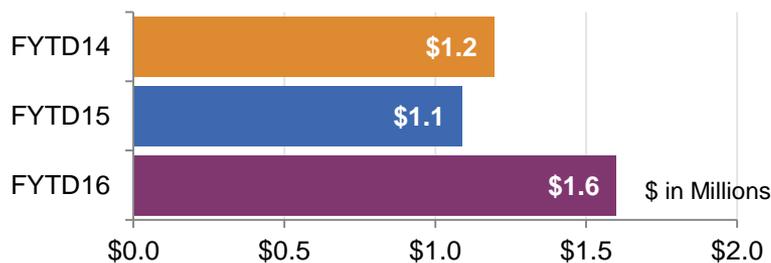
Small Business Fine Reductions

Fines Resulting from Inspection Efforts



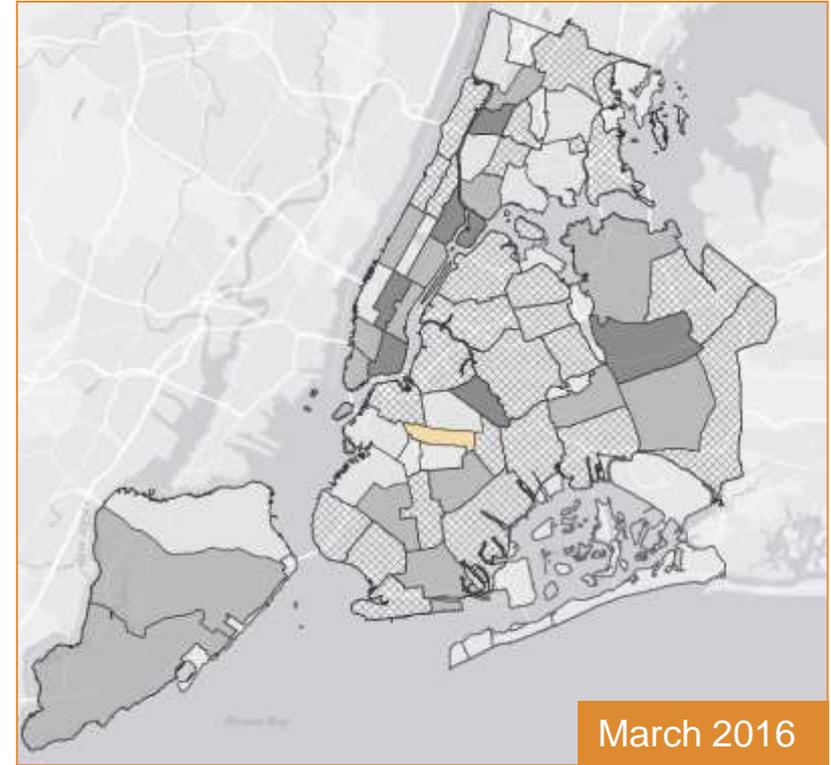
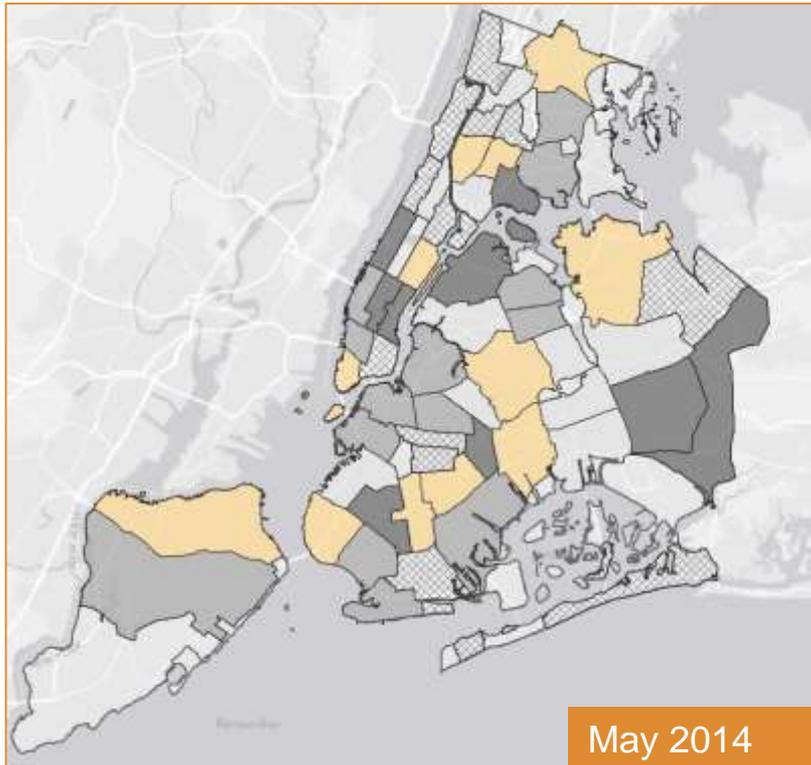
Fines assessed to small businesses decreased. *DCA reduced onerous fines through education, fairness, and transparency.*

Fines Resulting from Legal Efforts



Fines assessed to industries known for predatory practices increased. *DCA remains vigilant in protecting consumers.*

Equitable Distribution of Inspections



Percentage of Locations Inspected

- ☒ > 85% Inspected
- 80-85% Inspected
- 75-80% Inspected
- 70-75% Inspected
- < 70% Inspected

May 2014: Significant variation among districts.
March 2016: Minor variation among districts.

Equitable Distribution of Inspections

Likelihood of a business being inspected more than once a year by patrol inspection

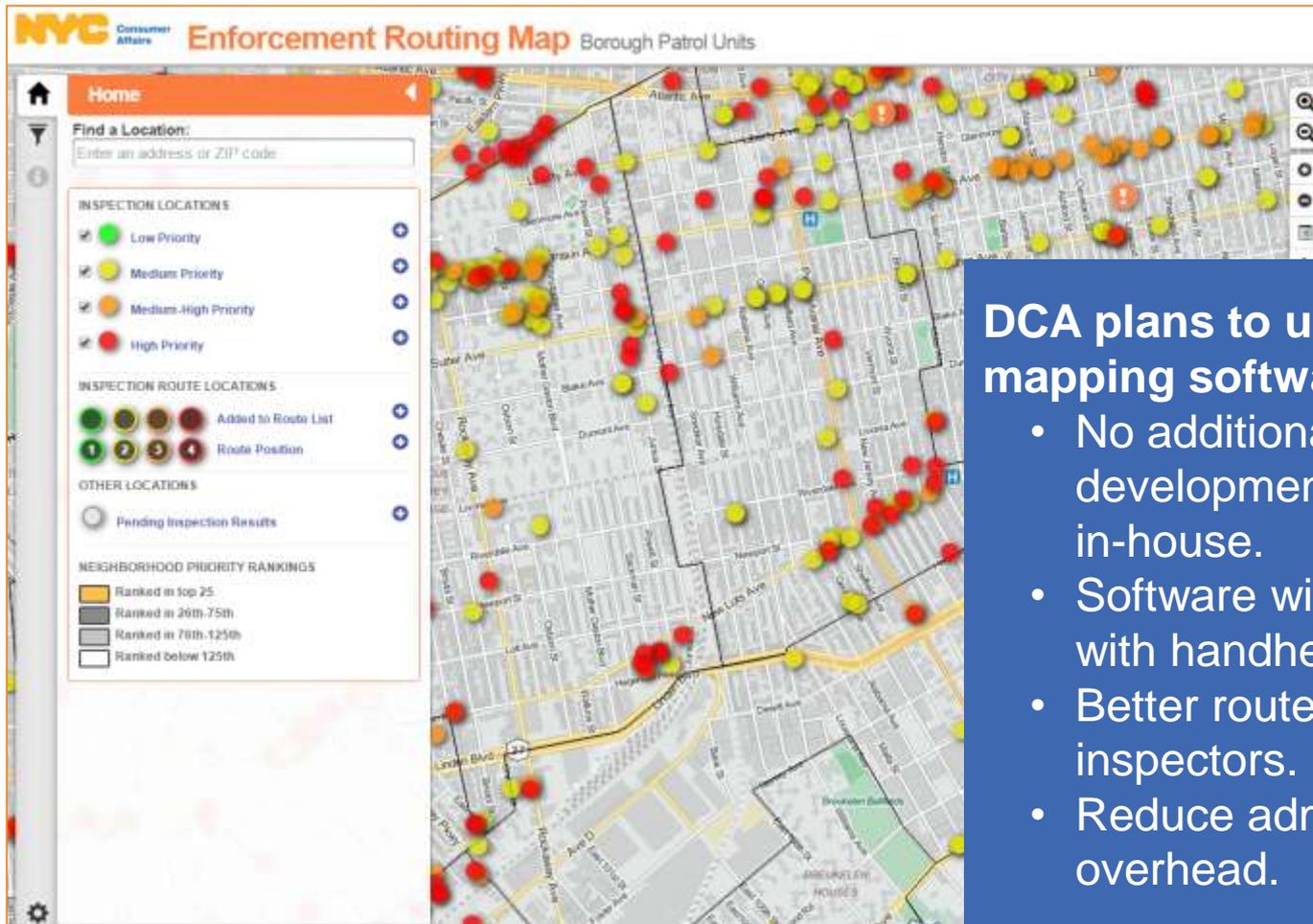


Without mapping software:
40% chance



With mapping software:
3% chance

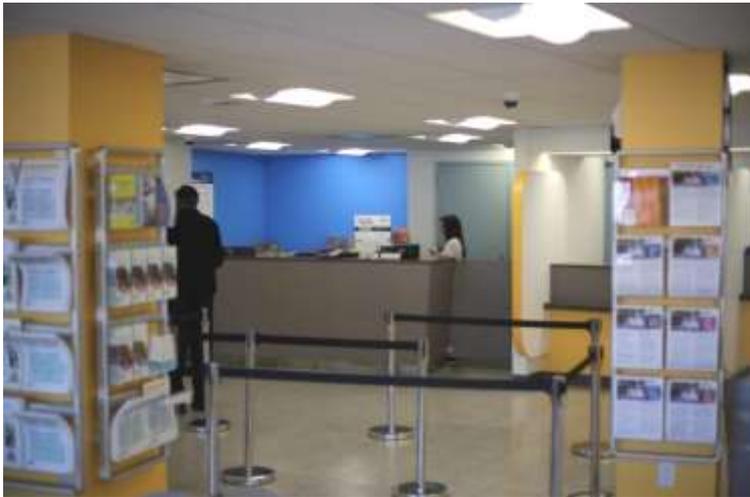
Equitable Distribution of Inspections



DCA plans to upgrade mapping software.

- No additional expense as development will be done in-house.
- Software will be compatible with handhelds.
- Better route selection by inspectors.
- Reduce administrative overhead.

NYC Small Business Support Center



GREAT SERVICE.
BUSINESS OWNER'S BILL OF RIGHTS
GREAT CITY.

AS A BUSINESS OWNER, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

1. Courteous and professional treatment by our employees
2. Inspectors who are polite, professionally dressed and properly identified
3. Information about how long inspections will take and the cost of all related fees
4. Knowledgeable inspectors who enforce agency rules uniformly
5. Receive information about agency rules from inspectors or other employees
6. Contest a violation through a hearing, trial or other relevant process
7. Request a review of inspection results or re-inspection as soon as possible
8. Receive explanation from inspectors (if requested) on violation details and instructions for viewing inspection results
9. Access information in languages other than English and request language interpretation services for inspectors
10. Comment, anonymously and without fear of retribution, on the performance or conduct of our employees

New York City is committed to providing New Yorkers with excellent customer service. We want to hear from you. To provide feedback and comments, please visit www.nyc.gov/customerurvey.

Do you need assistance with your business?
Visit www.nyc.gov/business



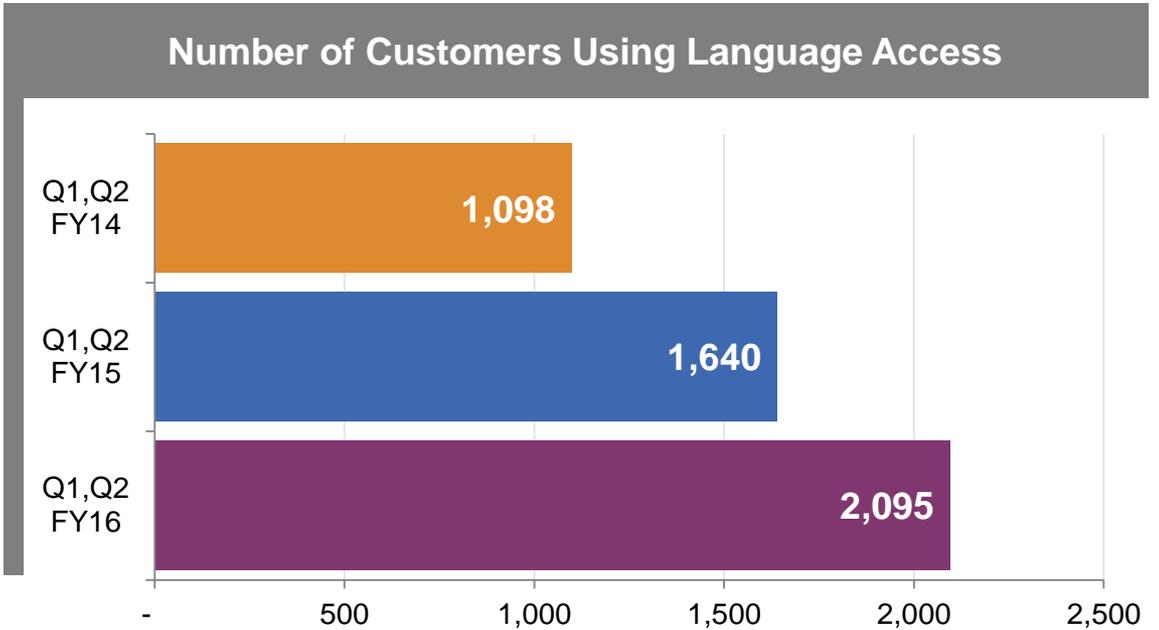
Instant Feedback from Licensing Center Customers



Average Rating
4.9 out of 5.0

% of Customers Rating
DCA as Providing
Excellent Customer
Service
92%

Language Access



Language Access

Our staff speaks...

हिन्दी

Shqip

한국어

Język Polski

Español

ਪੰਜਾਬੀ

Kreyòl

Italiano

العربية

廣東話

官官話話

Українська мова

বাংলা

اُردو

Français

Deutsch

Português

Русский

Hrvatski

Language Access

Our materials...



Data Transparency and Innovation

- Making DCA information available through New York City's Open Data Portal.
- Innovative and informative Sidewalk Café Map.

NYC Open Data Portal

The screenshot shows the NYC Open Data Portal interface. At the top, it displays "NYC OpenData" with a badge for "1300+ Data Sets Available". Navigation icons for GitHub, Facebook, and Twitter are visible, along with "Sign Up" and "Sign In" links. The search filters are set to "All" for Type, "All" for Category, "Department of Consumer" for Agency, and "Official Data" for Source. A search bar contains the word "Search".

The "Search Results" section shows a list of data sets. The first result is "Legally Operating Businesses" with 2,789 views. Other results include "Consumer Services Mediated Complaints" (427 views), "Financial Empowerment Centers" (427 views), "License Applications", "Inspections", "Charges", and "Licensing Center Customer Information".

| Name | Popularity | Type | RSS |
|--|-------------|------|-----|
| Legally Operating Businesses This data set features businesses/individuals holding a DCA license so that they may legally operate in New York City. Note: Sightseeing guides and temporary street fair vendors are not included in this data set. | 2,789 views | | |
| Consumer Services Mediated Complaints This data set features consumer complaints against businesses that were mediated by the DCA Consumer Services Division during the last and current calendar years. It excludes complaints that may have ongoing legal investigations. | 427 views | | |
| Financial Empowerment Centers This is a list of the Department of Consumer Affairs' Financial Empowerment Centers. It includes the Financial Empowerment Center site name, part, hours, and languages spoken. | 427 views | | |
| License Applications This data set features license applications received during the last and current calendar years, including applications where a license was issued, withdrawn, or remains pending. For a list of legally operating businesses, please refer to the DCA - Legally Operating Businesses data set. This data set is updated on a weekly basis. | | | |
| Inspections This data set features DCA inspections during the last and current calendar years to ensure compliance with local consumer protection and licensing and federal regulations. | | | |
| Charges This data set features DCA-issued charges during the last and current calendar years to ensure compliance with local consumer protection and licensing and State and federal regulations. | | | |
| Licensing Center Customer Information This data set features a monthly snapshot of customer service information at the DCA Licensing Center. | | | |

Showing 7 of 7.

DCA posts data on inspections, violations, mediated complaints, and license applications via NYC's Open Data Portal.

Sidewalk Café Map

- Sidewalk café issues are a top source of inquiries from restaurants, elected officials, Community Boards, and the media.
- DCA's innovative, interactive map puts crucial information — zoning, license requirements, application status, and much more — right at your fingertips.

Sidewalk Café Map



Sidewalk Cafés All Operating Cafés

Select Language ▼

Home

Businesses can legally operate a sidewalk café if they hold a DCA license or a temporary operating letter.

Map Controls:

I want the map to show:
All Operating Cafés

Find a Business:
Enter a business name, address or ZIP code

Find a Location:
Enter an address or ZIP code

Key:

SIDEWALK CAFÉ LOCATIONS

- Enclosed Sidewalk Café
- Regular Unenclosed Sidewalk Café
- Small Unenclosed Sidewalk Café
- Combined Unenclosed Sidewalk Café
- Inactive Sidewalk Café

SIDEWALK CAFÉ ZONING REGULATIONS

- All Sidewalk Café types are allowed.
- All Unenclosed Sidewalk Cafés are allowed.
- Only Small Unenclosed Sidewalk Cafés are allowed.

File a Complaint:

- DCA Website (account required)
- 311 Online (no account required)

DISCLAIMER

Built using Bootstrap, code licensed under MIT
Sidebar icons licensed under (CC BY 3.0) by Glyphicons

Select a Community District for a Summary

Leaflet | SWC data © NYC DCA, Zoning Regula...

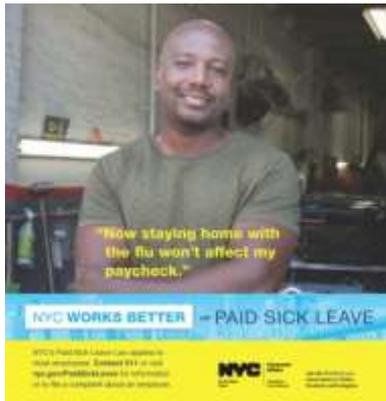
Protecting Consumers

- **More than \$4.8 million** secured in fines and restitution through legal investigations into secondhand auto dealers, employment agencies, home improvement contractors, towing companies, and debt collectors who preyed on consumers.
- **\$500,000 fine** secured from Whole Foods, a key example of a patrol investigation success.

Protecting Employees in NYC

- Paid Sick Leave Law fines and restitution.
- Outreach on Paid Sick Leave and Commuter Benefits laws.
- Advocacy and outreach efforts to nail salon owners, workers, and consumers.

Paid Sick Leave Outreach



2 million+

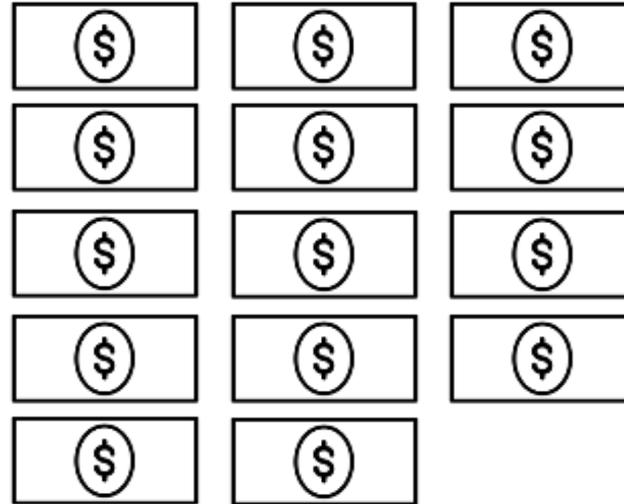
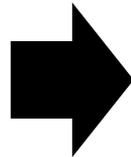
Materials distributed on NYC's Paid Sick Leave Law

1,072

Presentations on NYC's Paid Sick Leave Law



Paid Sick Leave Enforcement

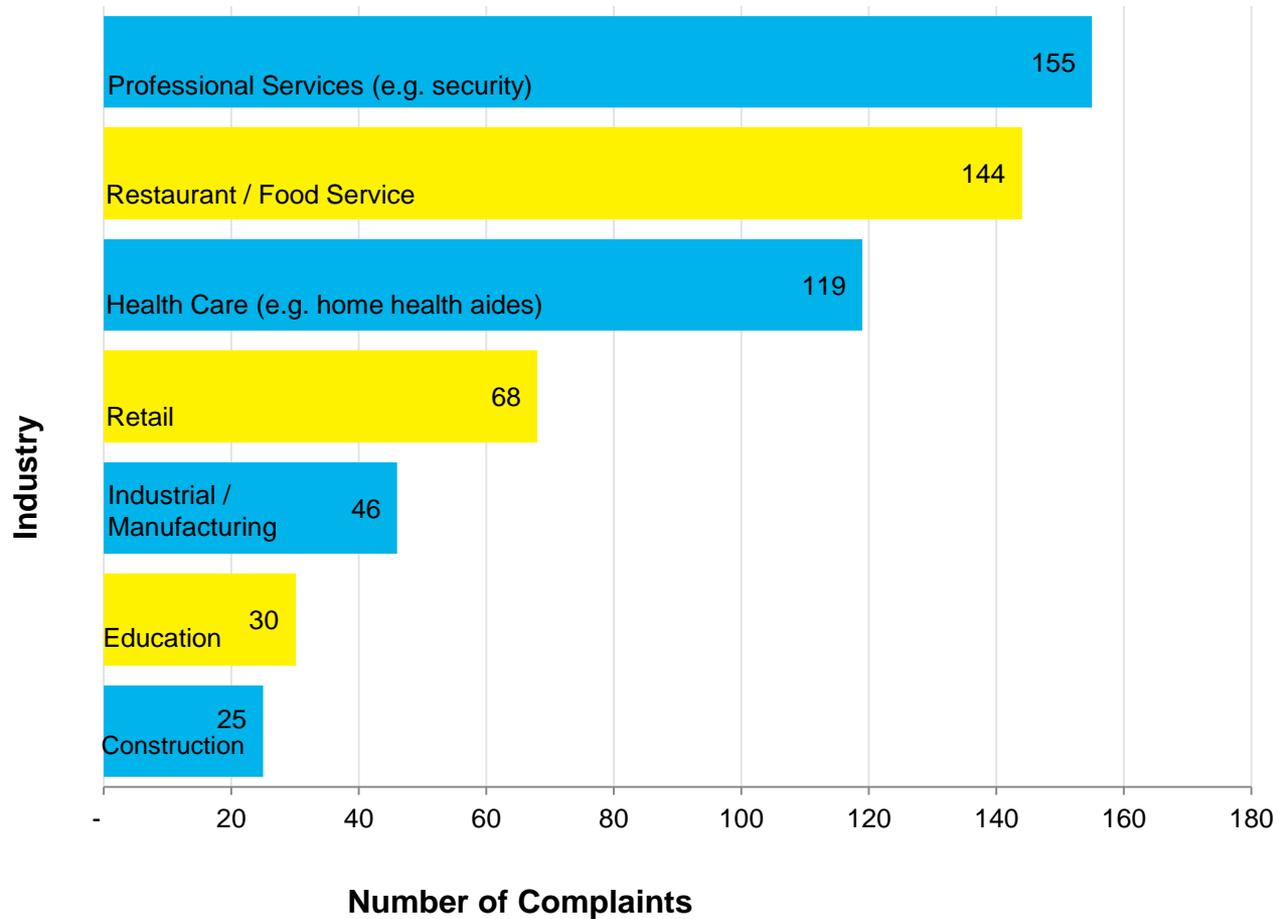


Each complaint has led to 14 employees receiving restitution on average.

9,573
individuals receiving
restitution

\$1.7 million
in paid sick leave fines and
restitution secured

Paid Sick Leave Complaints by Industry



Commuter Benefits Outreach



37,000+

Materials distributed on NYC's Commuter Benefits Law

183

Presentations on NYC's Commuter Benefits Law



Nail Salon Day of Action



500+

volunteers at

Nearly 100

subway stations distributing tips to salon employees and customers on how to protect themselves.

1,000

nail salons visited by City employees to educate owners/managers about their responsibilities as employers on wage, labor, and health and safety issues.

Advocating Fair Business Practices

- Shut the Front Door! Day of Action.
- “From Cradle to Cane” study of gender pricing in NYC.

Shut the Front Door! Business Education



200+
volunteers distributing
multilingual
information at
45
business corridors.

Gender Pricing Study

Figure 1: Example, Bikes and Scooters

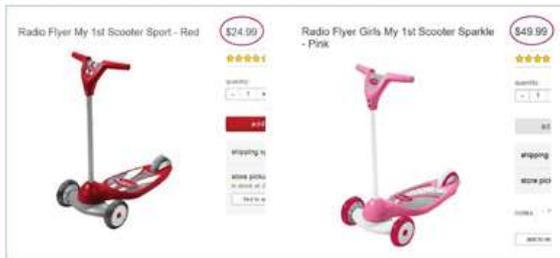
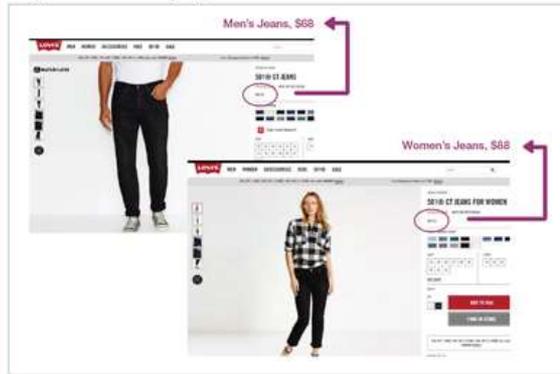


Figure 6: Example, Razor Cartridges



Figure 4: Example, Jeans



Nearly
800
products compared from
90+
brands.
42%
of the time women's products were
priced higher than male version of
the product.

Financially Empowering New Yorkers

- Expanding free financial counseling.
- Alerting eligible New Yorkers about free tax filing options and raising awareness about refund-boosting tax credits.
- Conducting studies to analyze needs, barriers, and opportunities to increase financial inclusion.
- Offering tips to young adults.

Free One-on-One Financial Counseling



Financial
Empowerment
Center



Ventanilla de Asesoría
Financiera

\$36,000,000

in cumulative debt reduced by clients.

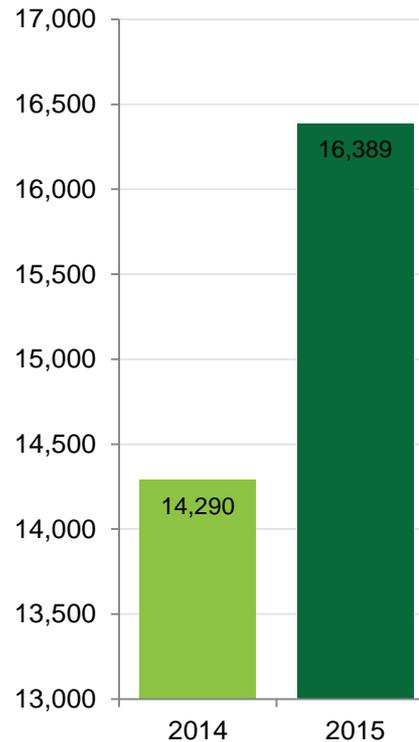
\$4,000,000

in savings accumulated by clients.

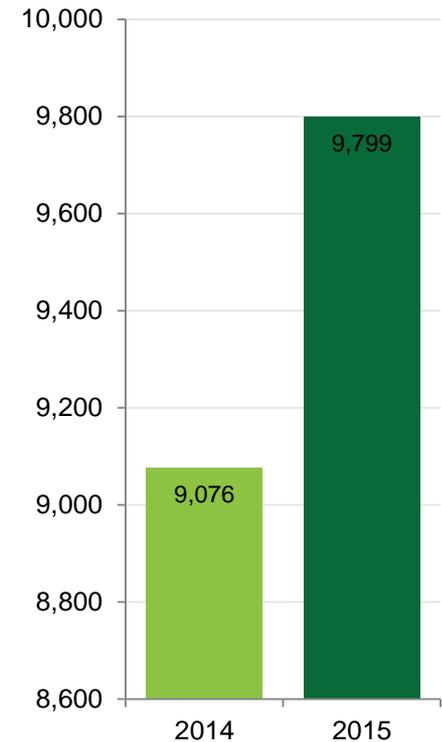
2,000 clients

improved credit scores by at least 35 points.

Financial
Counseling Sessions



Unique Financial
Counseling Clients

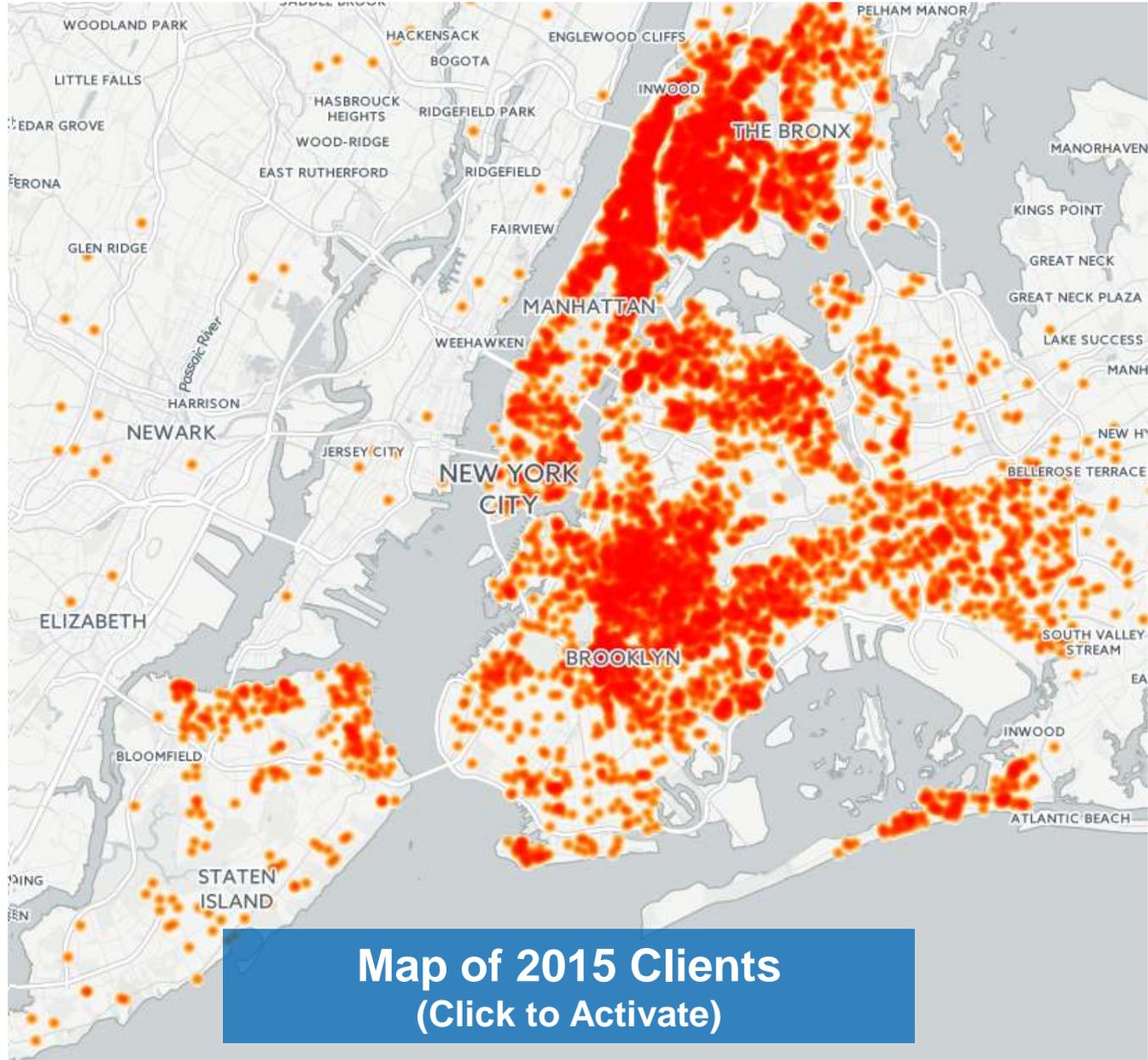


More clients and financial counseling sessions in 2015 than ever before.

Financial Empowerment Centers



Financial Empowerment Center Clients



Map of 2015 Clients
(Click to Activate)

2015 NYC Tax Time Campaign



We're saving for an emergency.
What would you do with *your* refund?

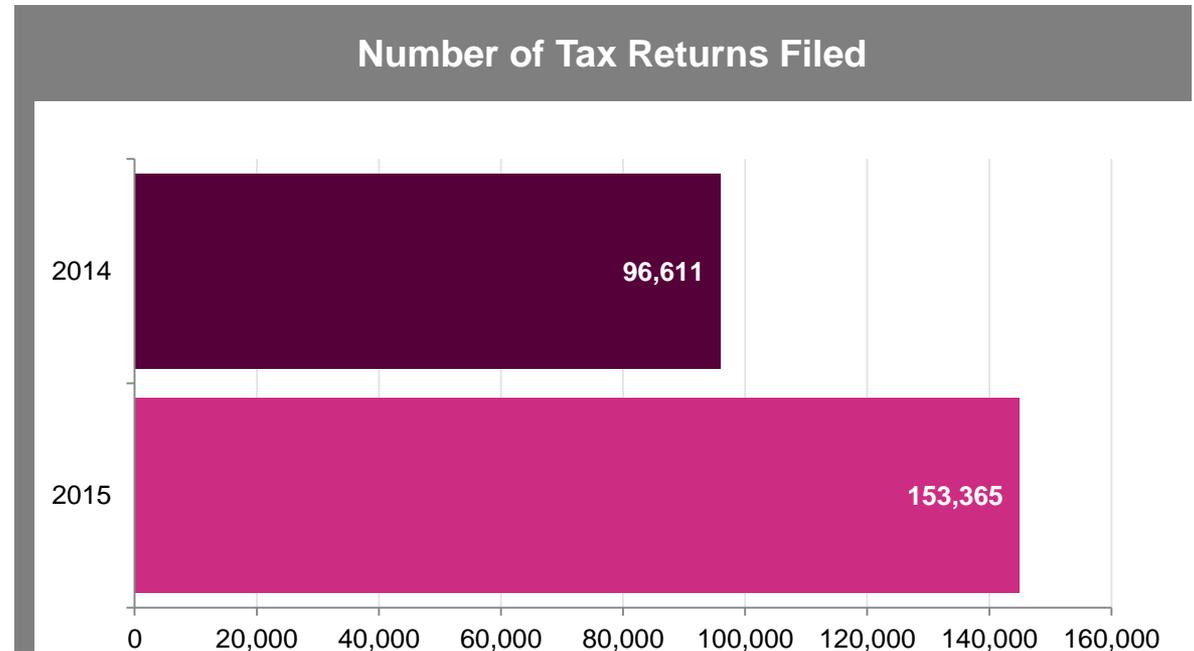
You may be eligible for up to \$10,000 from tax credits, including the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

Call 311 or go to nyc.gov/taxprep for ways to file your taxes for FREE.

NYC Consumer Affairs
Office of Financial Empowerment
Call 311
311.nyc.gov

citi

Text "Refund" to 67777 and join #NYCTaxTime. Download the app on the App Store, Google Play, and Amazon. *Eligible for the app through 12/31/15 only.



2016 NYC Free Tax Prep Sites

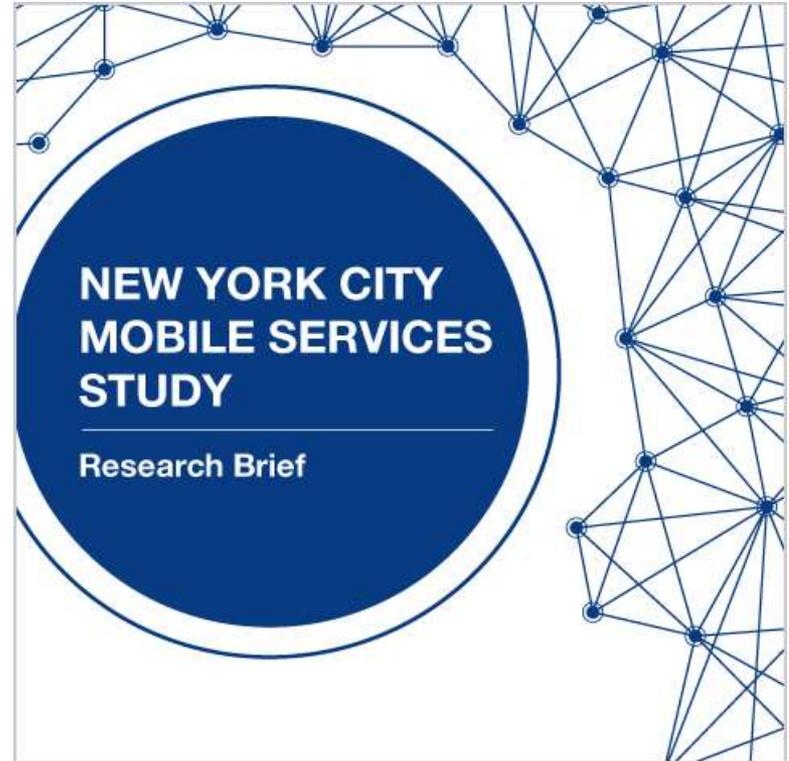
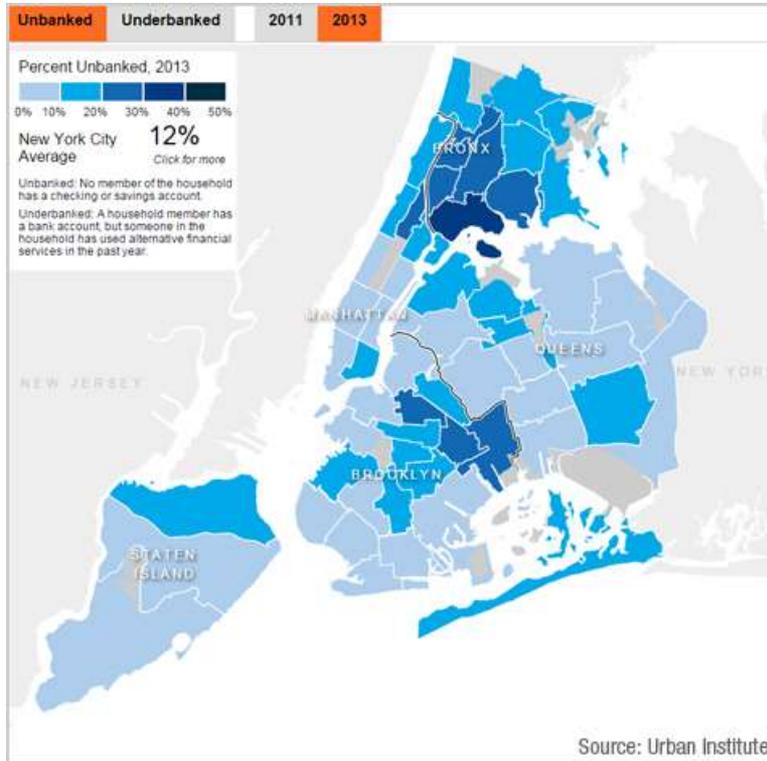
The screenshot displays the NYC Free Tax Prep website interface. On the left is a sidebar with filters: 'Services Provided' (with a dropdown for 'Show all NYC Free Tax Prep Sites'), 'Walk in or Call for Appointment?' (set to 'Both'), 'Specialized Assistance' (checkboxes for ARBITICE specialists, TIN application assistance, amending returns, and wheelchair accessibility), 'Address', 'Schedule', and 'Languages Available at Site'. A search bar and 'Reset' button are at the bottom of the sidebar. The main area is a map of NYC with numerous red location pins. The top navigation bar includes 'Home', 'Results List' (with '135' items), and 'Before you Visit'. A 'Select Language' dropdown and 'Powered by Google Translate' are visible in the bottom right of the map area.

NYC
FREE
TAX PREP

Trusted,
Professional
Filing

200+ NYC Free
Tax Prep sites
throughout the
city.

Research Studies on Financial Behaviors of New Yorkers



Consumer Tips for Young Adults



Financial Empowerment - IDNYC



University Settlement
Federal Credit Union

*Financial Access, Financial Success
For all our Members since 1940*

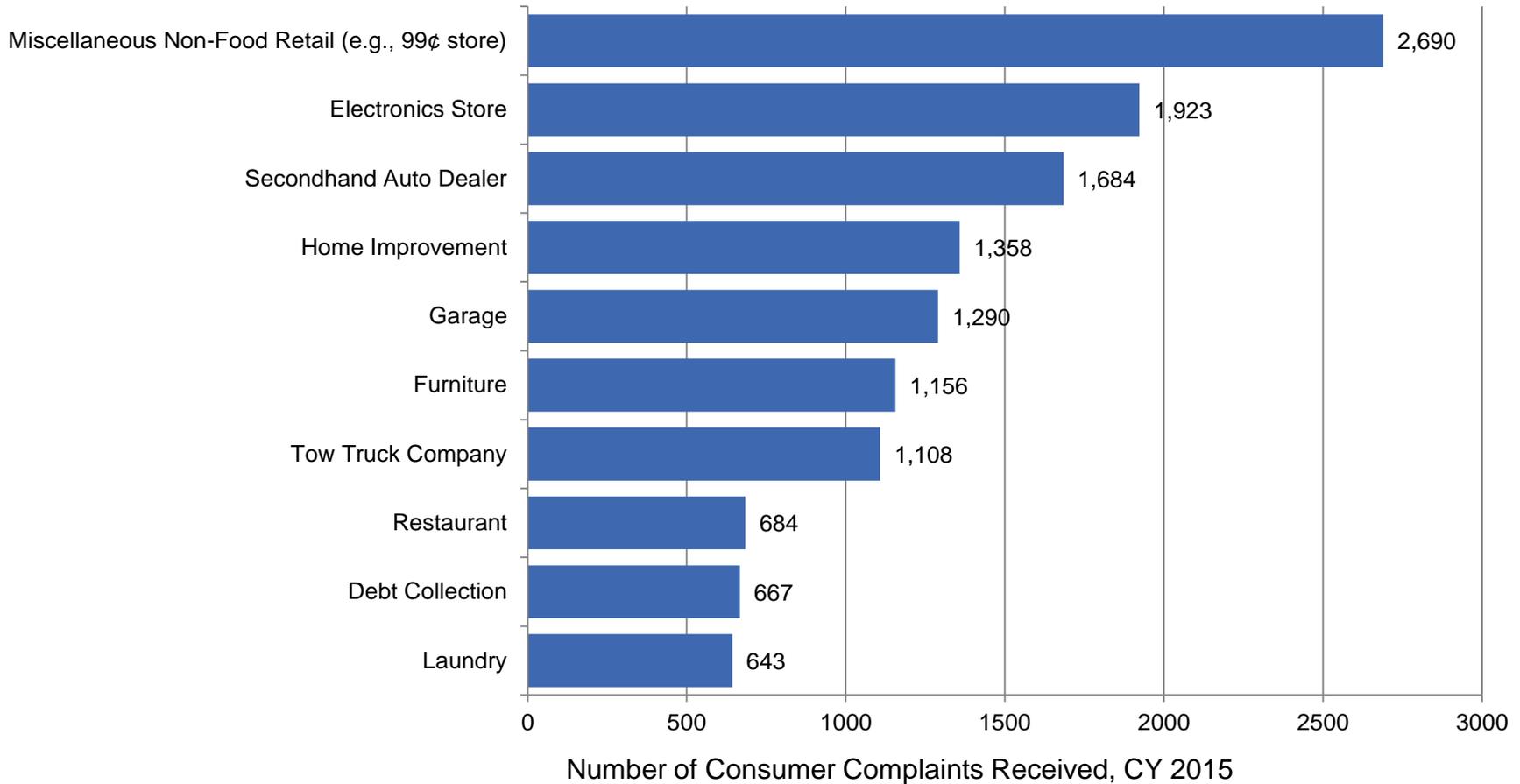


URBAN UPBOUND
Credit Union

Doing What We Do – But Better

- **Goal: Preventing “bad actor” businesses or licensed individuals from being able to easily apply for or renew licenses.**
- **Goal: Serious complaints = serious enforcement.**

Top Complaints Received by Industry



Doing What We Do – But Better

- **Goal: Fairer, clearer laws and small business relief.**
- **Goal: Appropriate expansion of legal authority.**



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